

31 October 2003

Dear Dr. Zerhouni.

Recently, your office generously granted \$75,000 of FY 2003 funds to hold the inaugural meeting of the new NIH Systems Biology Special Interest Group (SIG). It is with great pleasure that we provide this status report on that meeting which starts on the evening of November 7th. We also wish to extend an invitation to you or your designee to attend this meeting.

We currently have over 100 people registered for the meeting, which meets our expectations and matches the meeting venue, Arlie House in Warrenton, Virginia. We consider this level of participation very successful, given the timing and start-up nature of the SIG's activity.

We have been extremely encouraged by the scientific advisors who accepted our invitation. About 22 registrants are presenters from leading US universities and medical schools who are recognized as thought leaders in the emerging field of systems biology. Approximately 60 of the participants are NIH extramural or intramural staff from 16 ICs now enrolled as members of the NIH Systems Biology SIG. We would have liked to enlist more posters for this meeting, but the current tally here also exceeds expectations for the first meeting of a group devoted solely to systems biology, a topic that is still unfamiliar to many.

Based on these numbers, we are confident that this meeting will accomplish its purpose – to establish a vigorous training agenda and scientific program that our SIG members can implement in the coming years.

More importantly perhaps, it is our hope that the outcome of this meeting will yield insights relevant to the NIH Roadmap and the recent IOM report on large-scale science. With this in mind, we have arranged to produce a report from the meeting relevant to these matters.

Finally, we welcome you to attend because we believe this meeting has the potential to be a watershed moment for systems biology in biomedical research. If you are available, we would arrange time on the agenda for you to offer remarks.

We thank you again for your support of the NIH Systems Biology Special Interest Group.

Sincerely,

Richard W. Morris, Ph.D. NIAID

John Whitmarsh, Ph.D., NIGMS

Attachment Agenda: NIH Systems Biology SIG Annual Scientific and Training Retreat CC Members of the NIH Systems Biology SIG